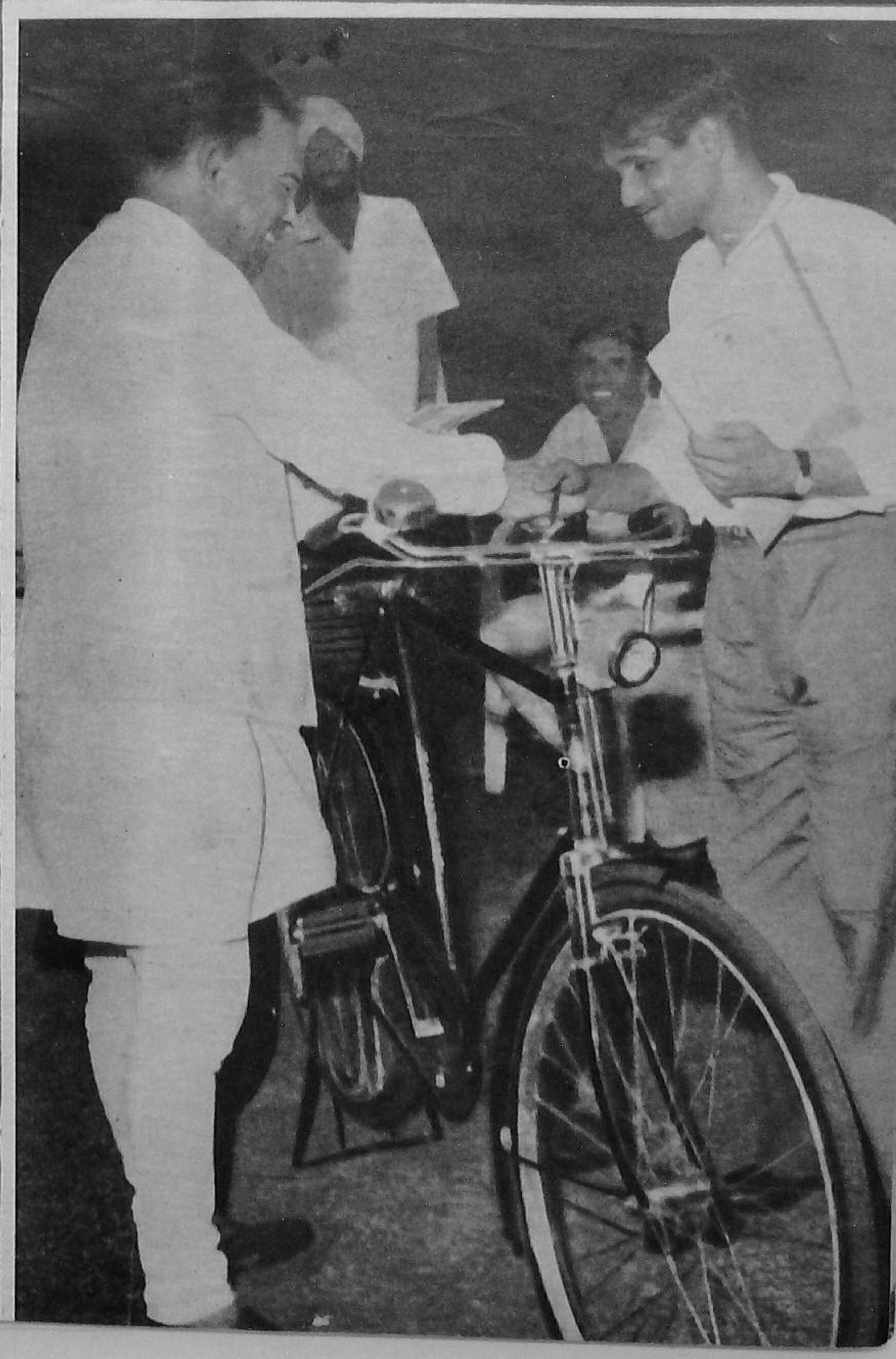
22 OCT 1962
RURAL EXTENSION TRAINING CENTRE

Panchayati Raj

OCTOBER 1962



BEST GRAM SEVAK OF THE YEAR

Shri Niyaz Ali from Uttar Pradesh who was adjudged the best Gram Sevak of the country during 1961-62 is receiving a prize of Rs. 2,500 which includes the cost of a bicycle presented to him by Shri S.K. Dey, Minister for Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation, at a special function held for the purpose.

PROBLEMATIC

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LETTERS

PROBLEMS OF A V.L.W.

Sir,

I READ the letter, "Problems of a V.L.W." published in the July issue of 'Panchayati Raj' as also your editorial note on it. I believe most of the V.L.Ws are unaware of the Panchayati Raj journal. I myself did not know of it until last year. After going through it in the library I became its subscriber and now I am getting it regularly.

I request you to continue the scheme of supplying "Panchayati Raj" and "Kurukshetra" journals at 50% subsidy rates to the Block Staff especially the Gram Sevaks.

The measures suggested by the Central Government for improving the future prospects of the V.L.Ws have been accepted by some State Governments.

The V.L.Ws' competition scheme did provide some encouragement in the initial stages. But gradually the V.L.Ws are losing interest in the scheme and they are not enthusiastic about it.

The V.L.Ws' Scholarship scheme for training in Rural Institutes was introduced in Mysore State this year. Only ten out of one thousand five hundred V.L.Ws. have been selected for training. Unless a much larger number of V.L.Ws. is selected, a majority of them will not get a chance throughout their lifetime.

The scheme of issue of awards or certificates of appreciation with or without cash for the recognition of meritorious work in the field of development work is not in practice in Mysore State.

The feelings and sufferings expressed by one of our friends are not only his. They are shared by one and all throughout the country. Immediate measures are needed to ameliorate their lot. The Central Government should call upon all State Governments to follow a uniform policy.

Let me thank you for publishing our genuine difficulties and grievances.

9-8-62
DEVANAHALLI.
Bangalore District.

Yours etc.,
H. Huliyarappa
Gram Sevak.

* * *

Sir,

I HAVE GONE through a letter "Problems of a V.L.W." along with your comments published in your journal of July '62. The supply of the journal to all V.L.Ws in this State has been stopped for some time now and there is only one copy received at the Block Office which, too, is not within their easy reach.

The Firka Development and Rural Welfare schemes were under operation since 1946 in this State. Most members of the staff entrusted with this work were political sufferers and constructive workers of Gandhiji's mission. Though many of them have since been weeded out, some fully qualified Gram Sevaks have been absorbed as V.L.Ws in the Community Development programme. Some of them have already worked for more than ten years now and they have qualifications suited for promotion as S.E.Os; but not even one has been promoted so far. An ordinary Secondary grade lady teacher with two years' service is easily taken as Mukhya Sevika (S.E.O.W.). What can the Community Development Ministry at the centre do to set the matters right? I am not exaggerating at all when I say that some efficient social workers now working as V.L.Ws with service of over ten years, and who are fit to be B.D.Os of the first rank are soon approaching their pensionable age as V.L.Ws only.

9-8-62 Yours etc.,
Rajamundry, *P. Choudary*
East Godavary, V. L. W.
ANDHRA PRADESH.

* * *

THE SILVER LINING

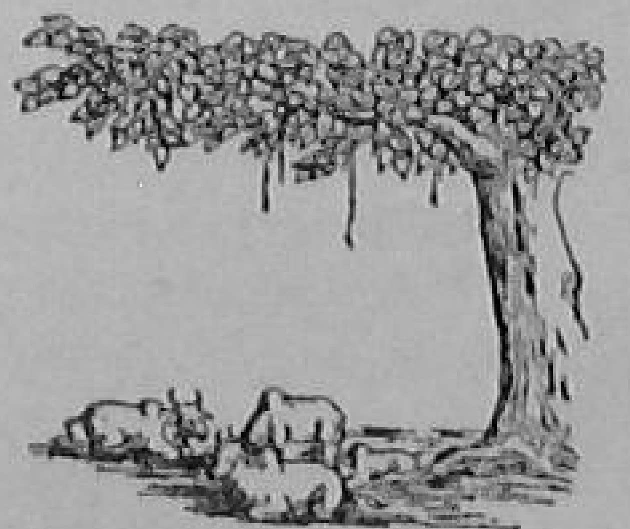
Sir,

I LEARNT from a letter published in your journal of July, 1962 that a V.L.W. has neither been given any increment nor promotion even though he has been in service for nearly ten years. His case is really pathetic.

I have put in six years' service as V.L.W. I have passed the Intermediate examination. Recently, I was selected for undergoing higher education at Gandhigram. Before I was selected for this Diploma Course, I also felt much concerned about my future. Fortunately, I had not much difficulty in getting my regular increments. There is little doubt that a village level worker, who, after putting in more than five years' service, is unable to get any increment or promotion, loses his enthusiasm and faith in the job. Now-a-days the teacher's post, for which my friend wants to go is considered to be better than that of the village level worker's which is a multifarious and more responsible job with a lower salary. The Central Government launched a scheme for village level workers to give them higher education with stipend. The selected village level workers, during their study period are given salary plus Rs. 50 as stipend. Award of study scholarships for a few village level workers is not enough.

I may add that thirteen village level workers from Andhra Pradesh, three from Kerala, eight from Madras, and nine from Mysore have been selected for three Years' Diploma Course which is equivalent to B.A. degree. The Governments of Kerala, Mysore and Maharashtra are gracious enough to recognise the service of the village level workers as important and have provided direct promotion from the cadre of village level workers to Block Development Officers. Thanks are due to Madras Government for having taken early steps to promote the village level workers to the post of Social Education Organisers and Panchayat Extension Officers. The existing circumstances in Andhra Pradesh, in so far as they relate to village level workers, may seem discouraging. But there is a silver lining to the dark clouds. I am quite optimistic about our future. Let us hope our State Government, too, will be generous enough to take up the cause of the village level workers in the near future and encourage them with due promotions and other incentives, allaying their doubts and fears.

20-8-62 Yours etc.,
Gandhigram, *M. Sankara Rao*
Madurai Dist.,
MADRAS.



PANCHAYATI RAJ

—An Exciting Task

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

He lit the lamp of Panchayati Raj for the first time at Nagaur on 2nd October, 1959.

The following is an edited text of Prime Minister's address to the Annual Conference of Development Commissioners and State Ministers of Community Development and Panchayati Raj held in New Delhi last month.—Ed.

IT IS just ten years since the community development movement started here. I remember very well with what great enthusiasm this movement started and how much we looked forward to that movement changing the whole background of the village. It did a lot but it did not come up to expectations. Ultimately it became rather stale. I do not suppose it is anybody's fault. But then it got a new turn some few years ago with this talk of Panchayati Raj. I am full of enthusiasm for Panchayati Raj and I do feel that it is something basic and something revolutionary to establish this among the 500,000 or more villages of India. It excites my imagination to think of these vast democratic representative institutions working right at the ground level from the villages upwards. Democracy is not merely Parliament at the top or in the States but something that excites every person and something which trains every one to take his proper place and indeed any place in the country if need arises. I have said, and I have meant it, that Panchayati Raj and for that matter anything that we do is ultimately meant to train up every individual in India to be a potential Prime Minister of India.

CONFIDENCE IN PEOPLE

In spite of their faults and failings, I have great confidence in our people as a whole. And it is that confidence that has pulled me through many difficulties because unless one has certain confidence in the future, one cannot do the work for which confidence in one's country, more so confidence in one's people, is essential, not merely theoretical approaches. It is that confidence that has made me appreciate the community development movement and now the Panchayati Raj development of it. When we talked of Panchayati Raj, many people, I remember, were rather doubtful about the capacity of our people to shoulder this burden. I was certain they will make mistakes. In fact it is sad to say that the crime rate has increased, the murder rate has increased. Nevertheless, we shall get over this and gradually develop this system of self-government at every stage. There is no half-way house. Either you trust them or your don't. Partly trusting them leaves you nowhere. Then they have no real responsibility and they do not develop properly. That is why, having given this authority and power to them, you should not tamper with it by official interference. I am convinced of that. Let them make mistakes and let them suffer from them. The officials must only be advisers, they must not be bosses. And not only the officials. The same applies to MPs and MLAs being members of Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads. They should be members I think, but whether they should be members with voting rights or not is another matter, because the chances are that the MPs and MLAs, having great experience and being better known personalities, will probably boss over the Zila Parishads

and the Panchayat Samitis. I want to avoid that. I want this kind of psychological atmosphere which is being created that they are masters of their household; they can decide; they can make mistakes and suffer for the mistakes.

Now, whether it is the Planning Commission or the Ministry of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, I find they have made tremendous progress in planning, but not in implementing them. We still suffer from the theoretician's complex of laying down things on paper and thinking they are done; but they are not done. Even the simplest things are not done.

CHILD WELFARE

Child welfare is important. The difficulty is there are so many important things we have to do and our resources are limited. We cannot spread out everywhere. But I am glad that the Planning Commission has, in the Third Plan, devoted some attention to child welfare and allotted a fair sum for that purpose. Now many things including child welfare depend a little on money, but not so much on money. A competent person interested and trained for child welfare can, without any money or almost next to nil, create a revolution in a village so far as children are concerned and I know some instances. Government did not do it. A competent woman sat in a village. The first thing she did was to gather the children all over and give them a bath. I am sure your Development Commissioners and others never think of giving a bath to the children in a village. Child welfare does not consist of putting up an office with a board and may be a little museum for children and collecting them and lecturing to them. A bath is more important than all the lectures you give. Therefore, it is the spirit and some training that count.

THE GOVERNMENT WAY

Whenever any kind of work is done, Government's way is to think of large numbers of functionaries and work out how much their pay will increase every month and every year and so on. A chart is made. How much office pay is required, how many vehicles are required, how many jeeps are required, all that is worked out before any work starts. I realise of course the usefulness of automobiles and jeeps and other things but I think we can do without them. It is better if we do without them. On bicycle you meet more people; may be you go lesser distance but you are in harmony with the life in the village, which has risen to the bicycle stage indeed as I have often said, but has not risen to the jeep stage. With the jeep, it is a case of the boss going round and giving some directions and going away. So all this business of putting up large-scale offices and large-scale apparatus and equipment is all helpful, but we must keep in tune with the level of the village in order to affect it. And the level of the village has not reached that stage yet.

THE PRIORITIES

There are so many things you are doing and it is difficult to balance them. But I should think that there are some things which are more necessary than others. Take drinking water. That is a thing which should reach everybody in the country; good drinking water in every village. Agriculture we lay great stress on, and improvement is visible. It is coming up, it should be faster and every community development block and Panchayat should realise that it is its job because on that depends all its prosperity. Agriculture includes co-operatives because without co-operatives, I am quite convinced, a village will not progress. We have talked about co-operative farming and on the whole, I find that even co-operative farms have developed fairly adequately, on a smaller scale of course, because we have not laid enough stress on them. But I do not want you to go about specially laying stress. Let us have service co-operatives wherever feasible, wherever people agree. If you suddenly have co-operative farming, then it will fail, but I am quite convinced of the importance of it. You must always consider the conditions in India and not decide theoretically that because something is good for Russia or America or England, it is good for India. It does not follow. Russia

(*Continued on page* 12)

NATIONAL HERO OF GRAM SEVAKS HONOURED

THE EVE of Independence Day brought honour to the country's national hero of Gram Sevaks, Shri Niyaz Ali from Uttar Pradesh. He, along with 16 other Gram Sevaks representing the best of the various States and Union Territories, had come to Delhi for the selection of the very best amongst them for the year 1961-62. A Central Selection Committee appointed for the purpose had earlier met in the Krishi Bhavan and interviewed them all to select the best two Gram Sevaks for the award of National Level Prizes among the States and two for the award of the State Level Prizes from among the Union Territories. Shri Sukh Deo Mandal from Bihar was adjudged second, at the national level. Shri G. Viswanathan of Pondicherry and Shri G. Thong Khotuan of Manipur were declared first and second respectively from amongst the Union Territories for the State Level Prizes.

A simple but impressive ceremony was held in honour of the winning Gram Sevaks. In the spacious lush green lawns of the residential bungalow of the Minister of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation had gathered together the officials of the Ministry, the members of the Central Selection Committee and a few more invitees. The front row was occupied by the winning Gram Sevaks. Besides the four Gram Sevaks who had won laurels were others who had been adjudged the best at the State levels. The latter included Sarv Shri M. John from Andhra Pradesh, Tuniram Savapandit from Assam, M. M. David from Kerala, Y. R. Shakya from Madhya Pradesh, P. V. Patil from Maharashtra, B. Govinda Reddy from Mysore, Sitakanta Panda from Orissa, Harnam Singh Jaggi from Punjab, Parvati Shanker from Rajasthan, Narain Paul from West Bengal, Shinghara Singh from Delhi, Vinod Kumar from Himachal Pradesh and N. Das from Tripura. Shri S. K. Dey, Minister for Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation presided over the function. Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, Minister for Agriculture was also present on the occasion.

As the rays of the setting sun were struggling to go down through the green foliage at the Minister's bungalow, the function started with the reading of a report by Shri B. D. Pande, Joint Secretary, officially declaring the result of the selection. As a spokesman of the Ministry later put it, "The job of selection was not an easy one. All the candidates represented the best from each State and there was not much to choose between the respective standards of performance of each." That is why, the Minister later on, pointed out that for those who had not been selected there was no cause for disappointment. After all, they too were regarded as the best in their States and had been awarded the prizes by their respective States. The Gram Sevak adjudged the best at the National level received the prize of Rs. 2,500 at the hands of the Minister. The prize covered the cost of a bicycle which was presented as a fitting symbol of the ground level work he had performed with excellence. Shri Sukh Deo Mandal who secured the second position received a prize of Rs. 1,500 including the cost of a bicycle that was also presented to him. Shri G. Viswanathan of Pondicherry and Shri G. Thong Khotuan of Manipur got Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 750 as cash prizes respectively.

Shri Dey, while appreciating the meritorious services rendered by the winning Gram Sevaks, remarked, "You will go down in the history as pioneers in the cause of development". Elaborating further, he said that the technical advice and

extension methods that they had advocated had proved effective and had stood the test of time. He narrated from his experience how even the best experts, in the absence of practical knowledge had failed to achieve the desired results. He, therefore, expressed the hope that in course of time, a thoroughly reliable and effective service would grow around the limited number of extension functionaries at present. He advised the Gram Sevaks not to rest content with the attainment of the high proficiency by themselves alone but that they should try to spread that knowledge to all others who came to them so that the latter could also come up to that high level.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh also addressed the Gram Sevaks and complimented them for their splendid performance. He liked the idea of the high-ups in the Ministry, keeping a direct touch with the Gram Sevaks—the ground level functionaries because on this close contact depended the success of the development programmes. Both helped each other towards a better understanding of their problems, he added. He expressed particular satisfaction at the fact that a region like Eastern U.P. which the Prime Minister had called very backward a few days ago, should have produced a Gram Sevak who secured top position in the country. "Even a dark cloud has a silver lining", he added humorously. The function came to a close amidst cheers and applause for the winning Gram Sevaks.

Shri Niyaz Ali, the ace Gram Sevak of the year, hails from Parakamal circle in Shah Ganj Block. He is a medium-sized, thin-built youngman of 26 years. When I met him, he looked somewhat embarassed at his own performance. He seemed to be a person of few words, shy but highly sensitive. When questioned as to what he considered to be his outstanding performance as a Gram Sevak, his reply was, "To help increase agricultural production through irrigation and widespread use of compost and green manure." He narrated to me how the cultivators in his circle had been induced to dig miles of field channels so that the irrigated area had more than doubled itself in one year. Out of 4000 acres of cultivated area, irrigation facilities were now available for 3000 acres, almost the whole of which had since been brought under irrigation. He made special efforts to popularise the use of 'dhaincha' as green manure. "Three years ago, there was not a single person who used 'dhaincha' as green manure. Today, there is hardly a cultivator who does not used it," he remarked. Indeed for that reason, the Block had come to be known as the 'dhaincha block' as he later told me. Another stride taken by the farmers was the wholesale replacement of the old wooden plough by the mould-board plough. As a result of these and other measurs, the agricultural production of the villages under his charge had gone up by about 75% during the last 2 or 3 years only. This was reflected in the rising prosperity of the villagers who now put on better clothes, had pacca houses and had cleared all their debts. It was only as a result of their better economic condition, that the villages in his circle were able to collect Rs. 16,000 under the Small Savings Scheme, securing top position in the district.

Niyaz Ali who comes from a poor family of carpet-weavers, has passed the Matriculation Examination in the first division. Due to stringent circumstances, he had to leave off his studies. He passed the Intermediate class privately. "What do you think is the cause of your success?" I asked him. Niyaz Ali, after brooding for some time replied, "I have never been jealous of my colleagues. I have always tried to cooperate with the officials of every department. The result is that I have always been able to secure willing cooperation from them not excepting even the patwari." He further added, "I have never liked the idea of any person pointing his finger at me. I have always tried to do my duty so that the boss does not get the opportunity to find fault with me."

FROM THE CENTRE

CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT FORGES AHEAD

RAPID STRIDES were made in all sectors of co-operative activities, particularly in agricultural credit which received the biggest momentum, according to the detailed statistics for the period July 1960 to June 1961. The number of primary agricultural credit societies at the end of 1960-61 was 2.12 lakhs as against 2.05 lakhs at the end of the previous year. Seventy-five per cent of the rural area and 26 per cent of the rural population stood covered by these societies as against 68 per cent and 20 per cent respectively in 1959-60. The membership of the societies at the end of 1960-61 was 169 lakhs—17 per cent more than that of the previous year (145 lakhs). Share capital of the societies at the end of 1960-61 stood at Rs. 57.5 crores showing a net increase of about Rs. 10 crores (23 per cent) during the year. Total deposits held by the societies also recorded a similar rate of increase, from Rs. 11.8 crores to Rs. 14.8 crores. The total working capital amounted to Rs. 273 crores in the year under review as against Rs. 223 crores in the previous year. The increased resources as well as greater borrowing from outside enabled the societies to advance substantially large credit during 1960-61 amounting to Rs. 203 crores—a net increase of Rs. 32 crores.

* * * * *

CASH AWARD FOR NAGORI CATTLE BREED

A CASH prize of Rs. 1,001 donated by the Akhil Bharatiya Sarva Seva Sangh is to be awarded by the National Livestock Committee to the best breeder of the Nagori breed of cattle. The prize will be awarded at the All-India Cattle show to be held early next year. Further details can be had from the Secretary, National Livestock Committee, Delhi-6.

* * * * *

DISTRIBUTION OF SALT THROUGH CO-OPERATIVES

SATE GOVERNMENTS have been requested by the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation to consider whether apex marketing societies or other suitable co-operative societies could be included amongst the nominees of State Governments for the lifting and distribution of salt.

* * *

ESSAYS AND DEBATING COMPETITIONS

TWO NATIONAL Rolling Shields,—one for Co-operation and the other for Panchayati Raj—have been instituted by the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation, to be awarded to the winning University in a National Debating Competition to be held some time during November 1962. In addition to the shield, there will be a maximum of three individual prizes of the value of Rs. 250, Rs. 200 and Rs. 150, respectively, in each of the two competitions for recognising individual merit. Debating competitions on these two subjects will also be organised at the level of each University before September 1962 and there will be two rolling shields, one for each of the subjects, for these competitions at the University level also in addition to three prizes of Rs. 75, Rs. 50 and Rs. 30 for individual merit. Universities have also been requested to conduct separate essay competitions on the two subjects. There will be a maximum of three prizes of Rs. 100, Rs. 75 and Rs. 50, respectively.

* * *

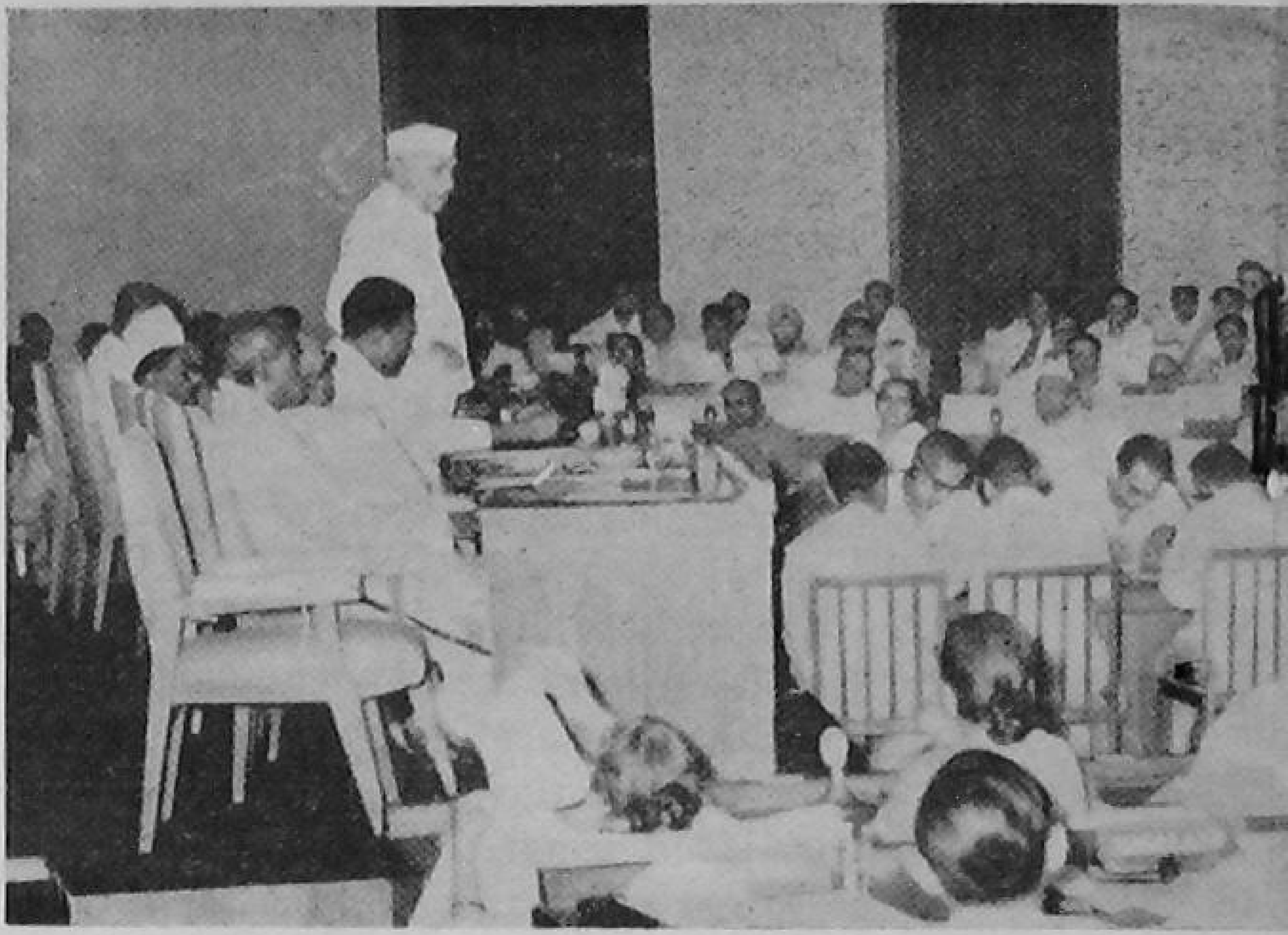
ESTABLISHMENT OF PANCHAYATS IN TRAINING CENTRES

WITH A VIEW to provide an opportunity for practical experience of the working of Panchayats to the Social Education Organisers and Mukhya Sevikas under training, the Directors of Social Education Organisers' Training Centres, have been asked by the Ministry of Community Development, Panchayati Raj and Co-operation to introduce a scheme of "Panchayati Raj in Practice". According to this scheme, an advance upto Rs. 500 can be made available to each centre subject to the condition that a similar

(Continued on page 12)

THE TWO CONFEREN

(BY OUR SPECIAL CO



The Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, inaugurating the Panchayati Raj and Co-operation

THE ANNUAL Conference on Community Development and Panchayati Raj followed by the State Ministers' Conference, was held in July-August this year in the spacious hall of Vigyan Bhavan. The Conference attended by the Development Commissioners,—the seasoned and experienced top administrators of the country, is marked for its pooled wisdom and rich experience born out of practical work on the field. And for political or policy matters, the State Ministers' Conference is there to resolve them satisfactorily. That is why their usefulness has been recognised in tackling the issues involved in the Programme from year to year. It is with great expectation that one looks forward to these conferences. Shri S. K. Dey, while inaugurating the Conferences remarked that these were being held at a strategic period,—exactly a decade after the movement was started and he expressed the ardent hope that the decisoins taken there would determine to a large extent the future of the Panchayati Raj and the Community Development Programme.

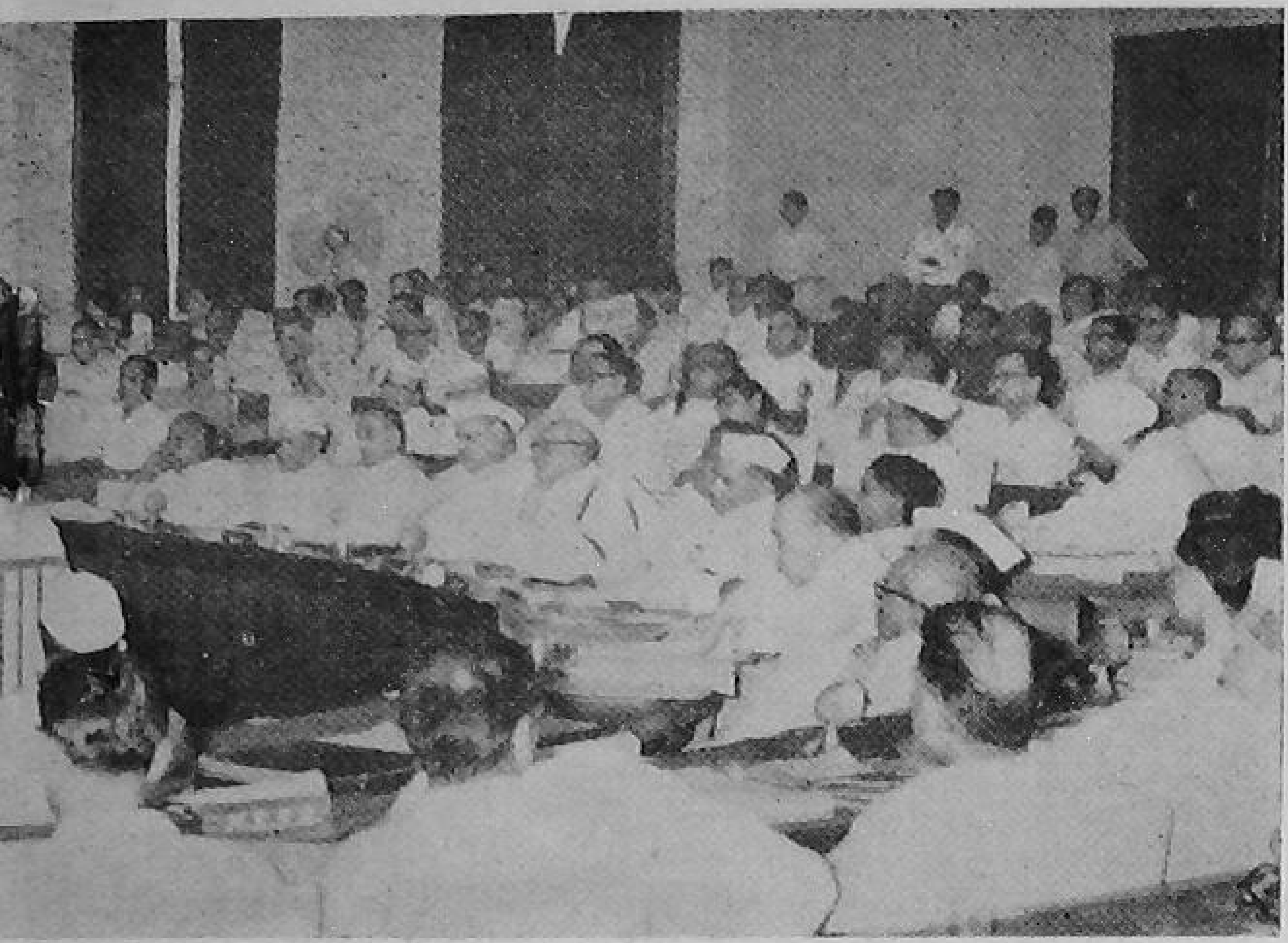
PROBLEMS DISCUSSED

The Conferences discussed a number of subjects and made recommendations. After reviewing and discussing the progress and problems of Panchayati Raj, it was re-recommended that M.Ps and M.L.As should not be allowed to hold office in Panchayati Raj institutions as their doing so tended to suppress the emergence of local leadership. In case they wanted to retain an office in these bodies, they should resign from the Lok Sabha or the State Assembly, as the case may be. It was considered desirable that they should be associated with the Panchayati Raj institutions, but they should not have the right to vote. The Conferences suggested that Panchayati Raj legislations now in force in various States should be amended accordingly, if found necessary.

Quite a stir was caused when the Development Minister of Orissa, in his characteristic style pleaded for a handsome honorarium to be paid to the office-bearers of the Panchayati Raj bodies, as that would help to keep them going firmly on the path of honest and hard work. However, the general opinion in the House was against such a step. It was, therefore, recommended that the chairmen of Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads should not be paid any salaries but only the Travelling Allowance and Dearness Allowance to meet their out-of-pocket expenses or a consolidated honorarium in lieu thereof. It was recommended that those States which permitted honorarium in addi-

NCES—A RETROSPECT

(…ORRESPONDENT)



…e Conference of State Ministers of Community Development, …on at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi.

tion to Travelling Allowance and Dearness Allowance, should reconsider the matter.

Top priority was recognised for agriculture as heretofore. Emphasis was laid on mobilising cultivators' concerted efforts in increasing agricultural production through village production plans based on optimum utilisation of fertilisers, credit, pesticides, improved seeds etc. Need was felt to strengthen supplies and services all along the line. The Conferences reiterated the recommendation made at an earlier conference that the construction and maintenance of field channels by cultivators should be enforced by legislative measures. It was decided that Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis should look after minor irrigation works that were too small and scattered to be looked after by State technical departments. Further, the Panchayats should be empowered by legislation to levy suitable charges on the beneficiaries to defray the maintenance expenditure. Steps should be taken to intensify preparation of compost manure, popularising night-soil compost and to increase the consumption of fertilisers by providing facilities for storage in rural godowns and through other measures. It was decided that steps should be taken to make the scheme of bio-gas plants more popular and acceptable to the rural people. As an experimental measure, these should first be concentrated in blocks near the Extension Training Centres so that technical guidance could be made readily available. It was recommended that the Agricultural Produce Market Act should be enforced in all the States and that steps be taken for the expeditious construction of rural godowns. In order to link credit with marketing, it was necessary that in addition to the bond, an agreement should be taken from the member of the primary credit society that he would sell at least a part of his produce through the Co-operative Marketing Society and that the latter would undertake to deduct the dues of the primary credit society from the member.

In so far as the Rural Industries Programme is concerned, the Conferences realised the urgency of having an integrated and co-ordinated approach to the problem and therefore recommended the setting up of Co-ordination Committees at the State, District and Block levels to draw up a phased programme of implementation of schemes at various levels and to make specific allocations of funds for the purpose. These committees should work out a

time-schedule for the establishment of rural industrial estates, cluster type training centres and common facility centres. In order to ensure that the urban areas did not get lion's share of the available loans at the cost of the rural artisans, it was recommended that the State Coordinating Committee should decide the quantum of funds available for the rural sector from various sources. The importance of having an Extension Officer (Industries) in each block was reiterated.

For the welfare of the Weaker Sections, the Conference recommended that priority should be given to the backward classes for the provision of drinking water supply and that their share of peoples' contribution should be fixed at 12½% of the cost of the work or upto the extent of unskilled labour, whichever is less. In deserving cases, the Zila Parishad could further relax this condition, as it deemed necessary. It was further recommended that village Housing Projects Schemes under which loans are available for building houses should be implemented only in villages which have a substantial population of backward classes and that such schemes should be integrated with other Housing Schemes for backward classes under which subsidies are available so that a person eligible to get the subsidy may also get enough loans for completing his house. The Conference recommended that some facilities should be given to the Weaker Sections in blocks near about the urban areas in order to help them undertake poultry farming.

An important recommendation made under Women's and Children's programme was that of a Prize Competition Scheme for Gram Sevikas at the State and regional levels,—the region having at least 100 Gram Sevikas. The Conference recognised the need for providing residential accommodation for Gram Sevikas and recommended high priority for it, funds being made available out of the block grant.

NOT DISCUSSED

There were, however, some fundamental problems which though crucial to the progress of Panchayati Raj and Community Development, could not be considered by the Conferences. Not a few of these were the emerging problems of Panchayati Raj, such as the system of elections best suited for Panchayati Raj bodies in order to eliminate party factions and groupism; ways and means of evolving effective Panchayati Raj institutions in which the personal human factor comes to play as minor a role as possible. Other vital problems like financial resources of Panchayats and the role of Gram Sabha being already referred to Study Teams for detailed consideration, were not taken up for discussion. But there were other long-standing issues such as those of rural industrialisation; of halting the trend of "the richer section becoming richer and the poor poorer"; of helping the Weaker Sections to come up to the level of the more advanced sections and of providing full employment to a large section of the rural people, did not come up for discussion. The Deputy Minister, Shri B. S. Murthy, in his opening speech before the Development Commissioners' Conference had made a poignant reference to the plight of the backward classes and had hoped that the conferences would give earnest thought to the problem. The Minister, Shri S. K. Dey, while listing the achievements of the programme before the State Ministers' Conference, had also pointed out its failures and inadequacies. Speaking of the Panchayati Raj, he explained how in the initial stages when the National Extension Service Agency was responsible for the execution, the programme could travel down to the ground level and be implemented with the mere pressing of a button in Delhi, but now in the context of Panchayati Raj, they were face to face with an indeterminate factor,—the people's representative on whom they had to depend for its execution. Unless he did something incriminating, not even the Prime Minister could make him do anything against his will. The administrator was thus faced with a new and difficult situation. He was now required to play the role of an adviser and educator of

the people. This also presupposed the existence of satisfactorily functioning Panchayati Raj bodies. The Minister, therefore, desired that a system of incentives for good work and deterrents against irregularities should be built into the Panchayati Raj structure itself. It is a pity that the Conferences could not find time to consider these issues. The other three issues of inadequacy of rural industrialisation, rural unemployment and the unsatisfactory lot of the Weaker Sections are all interlinked. The Minister had laid his finger correctly on the problem when he pensively remarked that all experimentation with rural industries in the absence of adequate rural electrification was not likely to succeed. He rightly pointed out, "Till now we have only been tinkering with this problem and not tackling it in right earnest". He made a forceful plea for an equitable sharing of power between the urban and the rural sectors. "Unless this was done, it would be difficult to check the exodus from the villages to the urban areas and the conesquent growth of slums," he added. If the conferences had only given thought to this one problem and decided upon some concrete steps to remedy the situation, perhaps a panacea would have been found for the chronic ills of the countryside. The issue did come up before the Development Commissioners who recommended a certain percentage of the available power resources to be reserved for use in the rural areas. The State Ministers' Conference, however, postponed the issue for reexamination at a later date.

The main problems facing the Panchayati Raj were also shelved, some on the ground that since two important Study Teams on Resources of Panchayats and the Role of Gram Sabha have been constituted, their reports should be awaited, while the others were not touched. The only two issues on which the Conferences gave their consensus of opinion was the debarring of the M.Ps and M.L.As from voting in Panchayati Raj bodies and that of giving only Travelling Allowances and Dearness Allowances to the Chairmen, Zila Parishads and Panchayat Samitis. The Ministry and the Central Committee had already formulated their opinions on these issues and, therefore, in so far as they are concerned, it is only a matter of implementation by the States now.

NET GAIN

All said and done, the Conferences proved useful in their own way. A distinct advantage that accrued was that various patterns of programmes and organisations that had met with outstanding success in different States were held up as models and were recommended for being adopted by the rest of the States. Orissa's Expanded Nutrition Programme, the Rural Electrification measures as also the integration of various agencies at different levels carrying out Women's programme in Madras; the programme of rural industries implemented by Panchayat Samitis in Orissa and the popularisation of improved agricultural implements on the lines of the Etawah Model in Uttar Pradesh, were a few of these. This exchange of pooled experiences from the field is bound to prove very useful to all the participants Perhaps the Conferences would have done better if the agenda had been limited to the specific problems facing the programme and a clear-cut directive or a policy decision had been specifically asked for on each issue.

SOUND ADVICE

For those who attended the conferences, it was a great opportunity to have listened to words of wisdom and sound advice from the top leaders of the country including our Prime Minister who inaugurated the State Ministers' Conference and Shri Gulzari Lal Nanda, Minister for Planning who inaugurated the State Ministers' Conference and Shri V. T. Krishnamachari who presided over the conferences, Shri Shriman Narain and Shrimati Indira Gandhi who participated in the deliberations. The Prime Minister's warning to the officials against what he termed as the "Jeep-mentality" and "bossdom" are no doubt very timely since such an approach militates against the spirit of Panchayati Raj. It is hoped that the moral of the story

of a lady social worker who started her day after giving a bath to the children in the village, would not be lost on the Development Commissioners and other officials. The Prime Minister's avowed faith in the soundness of our people and their capacity for self-government at every stage, even though they might commit mistakes now and then, will serve as a beacon light to all those who have the good of Panchayati Raj at heart. The Planning Minister's overriding emphasis on agriculture as the base of our economy on which depends primarily our national income, should exhort the official and non-official functionaries to intensify their efforts in the direction. Shri V. T. Krishnamachari's call for efforts on a national scale to double the agricultural production by 1971; to reduce the widening disparities between agricultural production by 1971; to reduce the widening disparities between agricultural and non-agricultural incomes; to frame village production plans based on family plans and to fix obligations of beneficiaries under irrigation and soil conservation programmes such as digging of field channels etc; are observations born out of a life-time of rich experience on the field. These deserve the closest attention and early implementation. In the hustle and bustle of our development activities, we are apt to lose sight of the urgent need of child welfare work. The Prime Minister as well as Smt. Indira Gandhi did endeavour to correct this imbalance by laying emphasis on the development of a child's personality along healthy lines. The latter proposed that in order to ensure maximum benefits in so far as the full development of the personality of a child is concerned, there should be integrated services projects where concentrated work on all aspects of child-welfare could be undertaken, with special emphasis on vocational training facilities, preventive health measures and correct attitudes to the community and the nation.

FROM THE CENTRE

(Continued from page 7)

amount is contributed from its own resources. All trainees in the institution will form the Gram Sabha and elect their office-bearers as per laid down rules. The functions of the Panchayat will include, agricultural production programmes on the lands available within the Campus, management of mess, introduction of balanced diets, recreational activities, medical facilities, organising voluntary labour for community work, and reception of guests, etc. Such practical schemes of Panchayati Raj are already in vogue in the Orientation and Study Centres.

* * *

PANCHAYATI RAJ—An Exciting Task

(Continued from page 4)

and America are countries with vast tracts of land and relatively few men. Here we have too many men and women. I remember reading last year some speeches by Rabindranath Tagore delivered as long ago as 1911, over 50 years ago. He very strongly advocated co-operative farming in Bengal. Because of the conditions in Bengal, small divided holdings, there was scope for it. It was not a political approach, it did not give rise to any controversy as it does now. It was a normal commonsense approach and I believe, he adopted it in his farm.

SENSE OF EXCITEMENT

In spite of the criticisms I have heard about community development and Panchayati Raj, I have always felt excited about this work. It is an exciting thing to raise this vast number of human beings with their co-operation and it is more exciting to make them shoulder the burden themselves in a real way instead of doling out some help. And the Panchayati Raj and co-operative movement are the way to make them shoulder the burden and in the process of doing that they are growing themselves and probably solving many of the problems that trouble us today. So I hope, now that you are entering the second decade of this movement, you will do so with a sense of excitement, full of energy and by the time we reach the third decade you will have established Panchayati Raj fully and satisfactorily all over India.

AROUND THE STATES

ANDHRA PRADESH

SAFE DRINKING WATER FACILITIES

THE STATE Government took firm decision to provide safe drinking water facilities to all needy villages in the State by the end of the Third Five Year Plan. The Panchayati Raj Institutions have accordingly intensified their efforts to achieve this objective.

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HIMACHAL PRADESH

CLEANLINESS DRIVE

A CLEANLINESS drive was launched in 597 villages and 2,301 houses of Himachal Pradesh during June 1962.

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MADHYA PRADESH

SPEEDY CONSTRUCTION OF INDUSTRIAL ESTATES

WITH A VIEW to expediting the construction of Industrial Estates in the State, the State Government have decided to entrust this work to four different agencies *viz.* the Industries Department, State Industries Corporation, Small Scale Industries Corporation and Public Works Department. They will execute works worth Rs. 52.33 lakhs, Rs. 60 lakhs, Rs. 50 lakhs and Rs. 27 lakhs respectively during the Plan period.

* * * * *

MANIPUR

TRAINING THE GRAM SEVIKAS

IN ORDER to train Gram Sevikas in organising balwadi classes and in celebrating national days in a befitting manner, a training camp was held during May 1962. All Gram Sevikas in the Administration participated in the camp.

* * * * *

ORISSA

EXPANDED NUTRITION PROGRAMME

THE STATE Government decided to extend the Expanded Nutrition Programme to 42 new Blocks and 10 Training Centres in addition to the existing 32 Blocks.

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EXTENSION OFFICERS PROMOTED

THREE EXTENSION Officers in the State were promoted to the gazetted rank of B.D.O. on the basis of their meritorious work.

* * * * *

PUNJAB

DISTRICT PANCHAYATI RAJ TRAINING CENTRES

THE STATE Government decided to set up six District Panchayati Raj Training Centres. Their management was entrusted to the non-official voluntry agencies or to Zila Parishads where the voluntary agencies did not exist.

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RAJASTHAN

RUNNING SHIELDS FOR PANCHAYATS

THE RAJASTHAN Government has decided to award two Running Shields,—one to the Panchayat Samiti and the other to a Panchayat in each district for outstanding services in the cause of Small Savings Movement. The criteria for the award of these shields will be : best net collections, largest number of active authorised agents and largest number of C.T.D. accounts. The selection will be made by the Collector, District Organiser or National Saving Extension Officer and the Zila Pramukh concerned. In case of difference of opinion, the matter will be referred to the Development Commissioner.

* * * * *

GRAM EKAIS SCHEME

FIFTY-FIVE more Gram Ekais (Village Units) will be started this year in Rajasthan under the Gram Ekai Scheme, sponsored by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission. Fifty-eight such Ekais have already been started in the State, of which 17 are being run by the Panchayat Samitis and 28 by the voluntary agencies and other institutions. Twelve Ekais have been set up in Gramdan villages while one Ekai has been allotted to the intensive area of Sadri.

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"SCHOOL CHALO" CAMPAIGN IN RAJASTHAN

THE FIFTH "School Chalo" campaign was lanuched in Rajasthan in July with a view to increasing the number of school-going children in the age group 6—11 years and

(*Continued on page* 16)

COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE

PANCHAYATS COLLECT CENT PER CENT TAXES

THE PEOPLE'S co-operation in the programme is reported to be on the increase after the introduction of Panchayati Raj in Andhra Pradesh. A large number of Panchayats have fully utilised their taxation powers. It is understood that 264 panchayats in Guntur District, 164 in Cuddapah District and 59 in Krishna District have collected cent per cent of their taxes during 1961-62. Reports are being collected from the remaining districts of the State.

* * *

A NOBLE EXAMPLE

THE RANGAMPET Panchayat Samiti in East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh, has set an example in Harijan Welfare work. It observes a Harijan Day every month when a number of activities like construction of approach roads, excavation of drains and putting up of sheds for schools are undertaken through shramdan, in a selected Harijanwada. Harijans as also members of other communities participate actively in these programmes. Considerable improvement has been effected in a number of Harijanwadas. The State Government has asked all the other Samities to emulate the noble example set by Rangampet Panchayat Samithi.

* * *

VILLAGERS CONSTRUCT A DISPENSARY

THE BUILDING for a dispensary at an estimated cost of Rs. 10,000 is in progress at Jarugumalli village in Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh. Half of the cost has been met by the villagers.

* * *

SCHOOL-BUILDING THROUGH PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

A SCHOOL-building was inaugurated at Bukkapuram village of Putlur Panchayat Samithi in Andhra Pradesh. The villagers donated an amount of Rs. 3,200 by way of cash, kind and labour.

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FACILITIES FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

THE STANDING Committee for Social Welfare of the Zila Parishad, Warangal in Andhra Pradesh resolved to sanction Rs. 1,800 for awarding scholarships to 34 Scheduled caste students in the district. The Committee also resolved to sanction Rs. 655. for providing water supply and electricity to the Backward classes hostel at Hanamkonda.

* * *

MEDICAL BOXES FOR USE IN VILLAGES

THE NALGONDA Zila Parishad in Andhra Pradesh has collected 125 village medicine boxes for use in the villages. These will be kept either under the control of the school teacher or village level worker.

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HELP FOR THE WEAKER SECTIONS

THE PANCHAYAT Samithi of Mahadevpur in Karimnagar district in Andhra Pradesh has decided to spend 25% of the Block Budget towards providing amenities to Harijans and Tribal people of the Block area.

* * *

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH SELF-HELP

THE VILLAGERS of Paleru in Bijnapally Panchayat Samithi of Mahbubnagar District in Andhra Pradesh decided three years ago to develop their village through self-help and community efforts. As a result, they have now got a primary health centre, a school-building, Lady teachers' quarters, a beautifully laid-out park with pucca roads, electricity and pumping sets. Every house is fitted with taps. The Panchayat Samithi extended all possible technical and financal assistance.

* * *

WATER CHANNEL THROUGH SHRAMDAN

THE VILLAGERS of Chatter, Akauna, Solhanda, Buknari Khurd and Akipore in Makhdumpur block in Bihar have completed construction of a four-mile long water channel through 'Shramdan'. This will result in 1,300 acres of less fertile area yielding two bumper crops every year.

* * *

The Road being cut across hard rocks on the Western bank of the river Bhuvad.

SAGA OF A ROAD

BHUJ-NAKHTRANA block which was inaugurated as one of the first series of Community Projects in 1952, witnessed a spurt of road construction activities. Village after village came forward to build roads through people's shramdan. In course of time as many as 80 miles of roads were built. But all this hectic road construction activity left the people of Bhadli cold and indifferent. This as well as several other surrounding villages stood badly in need of a road-link. In 1955, after the 2½ mile road link from Majirai to Kalyanpur had been constructed on the one hand and a 3 mile road from Vithon to Dhavda, on the other, it was expected that people would come forward to take up the construction of the nine-mile long road connecting Vithon to Kalyanpur. But people of Bhadli would not stir, although all other villages concerned agreed to put their shoulders to the wheel. The road would be useless in view of the missing link. Consequently, the road construction programme had to be dropped. Even the promised grant-in-aid from the block funds failed to coax the recalcitrant village.

NEW TURN

Things however took a new turn after four years. It so happened that the year 1959 witnessed a bumper crop of groundnuts and cotton. The villagers of Bhadli decided to transport by trucks in Kalyanpur their produce in a lot for being sold there. But at the last moment, a trouble arose. In spite of their having improved the earth track, the truck could not go to Bhadli with the result that the cultivators had to take the produce in their own carts. This incident was an eye-opener. Consequently, they approached the Block authorities for necessary help. The Block had since reverted to stage II and the money was no longer available in adequate quantity for the purpose. This, however, did not deter them from undertaking the construction of the road. They felt satisfied if only the services of the overseer were made available to them for the proper alignment of the road. No other difficulties stood in their way. There was the question of acquisition of land for the road and the payment of compensation to the land owners. They tackled it wisely. They approached the different landowners through whose fields the road passed and persuaded them to give up the land voluntarily. In this way, 26 cultivators belonging to seven different villages gave away 10 acres of land for the project without any compensation. This saved time as well as money.

OPERATION ROAD

After all these formalities had been completed, the survey work was taken in hand. It took 15 days for the Block overseer to complete the road alignment through the difficult terrain of the countryside. The villagers themselves procured all the necessary implements required for the road construction. Each of

the seven villages took upon itself to build the road passing through its jurisdiction. Hundreds of villagers from the vicinity also joined hands in the "Operation Road" which began in May, 1959.

During the construction operation lot of difficulties were encountered. But what can stand against the firm determination of an awakened people? Even the rivers and mountains have to admit defeat. And so it happened. Between Bhadli and Majirai, there is a river named Bhuvad. The banks of this river are very high on both the sides. It was not an easy job to cut the rocks and make a passage through them. People, were, however, not discouraged. At many places the height of the rock was 30 ft., going upto 33 ft. at one place. From these hard rocks, a road 16 ft. wide and 1050 ft. long was carved out.

Another difficult work was the diverting of a stream which crossed the road and then met the river down below. In order to save the road from the onslaught of the stream which becomes very turbulent during the rainy season, it was decided to dig a canal measuring 1000′×6′×4′ through which the stream was diverted to fall into the river, without having to cross the road.

Such has been the saga of the construction of the road in which the people's shramdan by way of earth work, rock-cutting and jungle clearance is about Rs. 24,000. Though the road is not yet complete, it is already providing beneficial to thousands of villagers who are using it in preference to the old circuitious path, which was 13 miles long and lay through steep rocks and hazardous jungles. The cultivators are reaping a profit of 50 nP. to 75 nP. per md. of their agricultural produce. Similarly, commodities brought from outside have become much cheaper. A slow but sure economic transformation is taking place in the lives of the people. The social life of the community, too, is improving under its healthy impact.

AROUND THE STATES

(Continued from page 13)

also to collect cash and material for school building and for teaching. Prabhat Pheries, public meetings, admission of children specially girls in schools and collection of teaching material, exhibitions of art and craft work by children and cultural programmes were the main features of this campaign. Prizes to schools enrolling highest number of children, girls and children of backward classes were also given at the Panchayat and Zila Parishad levels.

* * * * *

UTTAR PRADESH

BEST GAON SABHAS

BEST GAON Sabhas, one each from 875 Blocks were selected on the basis of their performance in regard to realisation of Panchayat taxes, regular meetings, shramdan, investment in small savings schemes, cash contributions, etc. The selected Sabhas were each awarded a set of 24 books.

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STUDY SEMINARS

STUDY SEMINARS of the Panchayat Raj Inspectors and Asstt. Development Officers (Social Education and Panchayats) of the hill districts were held from 24 to 27th June at Almora and from 25th to 28th June at Pauri Garhwal.

* * * * *

DRIVE FOR RECOVERY OF CO-OPERATIVE LOANS

CO-OPERATIVE loans amounting to Rs. 237.40 lakhs were outstanding in the State on the 30th April, 1962. The State Government initiated a special drive for recovery of loans from 1st May, 1962.

* * *

WAREHOUSING PROGRAMME

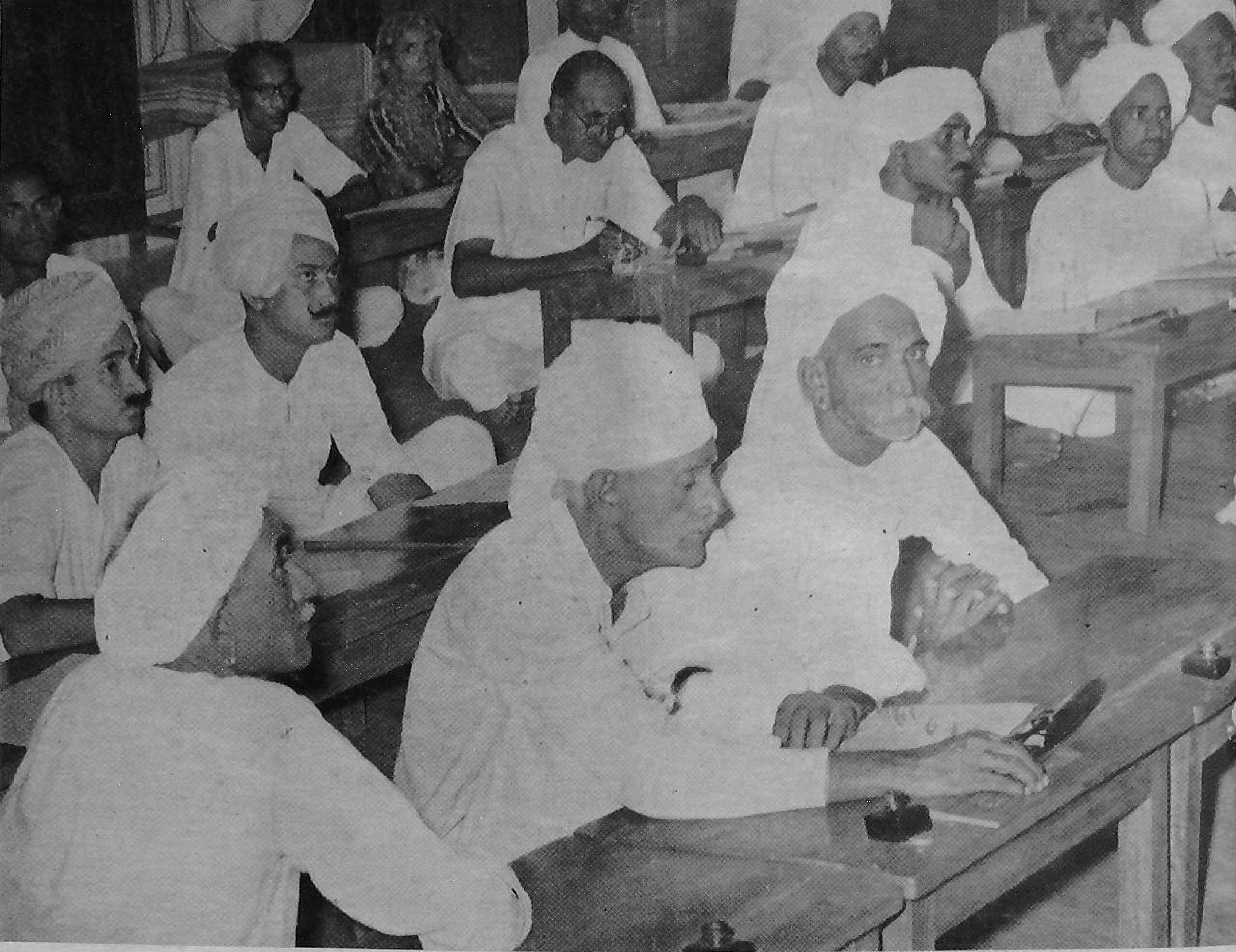
WITH A VIEW to strengthening the resources of the State Warehousing Corporation and to enable it to undertake the construction programme, the State Government made an investment of Rs. 3.5 lakhs in the share capital of the Corporation. The Central Warehousing Corporation was approached to release matching contribution towards its share.

* * *

The Bullock-carts came in handy for bringing the earth for building the road.

A ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Women, too, gave a helping hand in building the road.



Panchayat Samiti members undergoing training in one of the Panchayat Samiti Adhyayan Kendras, near Jaipur in Rajasthan.

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